

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 1832

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) Professional boxing differs from other major, interstate professional sports industries in the United States in that it operates without any private sector association, league, or centralized industry organization to establish uniform and appropriate business practices and ethical standards. This has led to repeated occurrences of disreputable and coercive business practices in the boxing industry, to the detriment of professional boxers nationwide.

(2) State officials are the proper regulators of professional boxing events, and must protect the welfare of professional boxers and serve the public interest by closely supervising boxing activity in their jurisdiction. State boxing commissions do not currently receive adequate information to determine whether boxers competing in their jurisdiction are being subjected to contract terms and business practices which may violate State regulations, or are onerous and confiscatory.

(3) Promoters who engage in illegal, coercive, or unethical business practices can take advantage of the lack of equitable business standards in the sport by holding boxing events in States with weaker regulatory oversight.

(4) The sanctioning organizations which have proliferated in the boxing industry have not established credible and objective criteria to rate professional boxers, and operate with virtually no industry or public oversight. Their ratings are susceptible to manipulation, have deprived boxers of fair opportunities for advancement, and have undermined public confidence in the integrity of the sport.

(5) Open competition in the professional boxing industry has been significantly interfered with by restrictive and anticompetitive business practices of certain promoters and sanctioning bodies, to the detriment of the athletes and the ticket-buying public. Common practices of promoters and sanctioning organizations represent restraints of interstate trade in the United States.

(6) It is necessary and appropriate to establish national contracting reforms to protect professional boxers and prevent exploitive business practices, and to require enhanced financial disclosures to State athletic commissions to improve the public oversight of the sport.

SEC. 3. PURPOSES.

The purposes of this Act are—

(1) to protect the rights and welfare of professional boxers on an interstate basis by preventing certain exploitive, oppressive, and unethical business practices;

(2) to assist State boxing commissions in their efforts to provide more effective public oversight of the sport; and

(3) to promote honorable competition in professional boxing and enhance the overall integrity of the industry.

SEC. 4. PROTECTING BOXERS FROM EXPLOITATION.

The Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 9 through 15 as sections 17 through 23, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 8 the following new sections:

"SEC. 9. CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS.

"Within 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act, the Association of Boxing Commissions shall develop and shall approve by a vote of no less than a majority of its member State boxing commissioners, guidelines for minimum contractual provisions that should be included in bout agreements and boxing contracts. It is the sense of Congress that State boxing commissions should follow these ABC guidelines.

"SEC. 10. PROTECTION FROM COERCIVE CONTRACTS.

"(a) GENERAL RULE.—

"(1)(A) A contract provision shall be considered to be in restraint of trade, contrary to public policy, and unenforceable against any boxer to the extent that it—

"(i) is a coercive provision described in subparagraph (B) and is for a period greater than 12 months; or

"(ii) is a coercive provision described in subparagraph (B) and the other boxer under contract to the promoter came under that contract pursuant to a coercive provision described in subparagraph (B).

"(B) A coercive provision described in this subparagraph is a contract provision that grants any rights between a boxer and a promoter, or between promoters with respect to a boxer, if the boxer is required to grant such rights, or a boxer's promoter is required to grant such rights with respect to a boxer to another promoter, as a condition precedent to the boxer's participation in a professional boxing match against another boxer who is under contract to the promoter.

"(2) This subsection shall only apply to contracts entered into after the date of the enactment of the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act.

"(3) No subsequent contract provision extending any rights or compensation covered in paragraph (1) shall be enforceable against a boxer if the effective date of the contract containing such provision is earlier than 3 months before the expiration of the relevant time period set forth in paragraph (1).

"(b) PROMOTIONAL RIGHTS UNDER MANDATORY BOUT CONTRACTS.—No boxing service provider may require a boxer to grant any future promotional rights as a requirement of competing in a professional boxing match that is a mandatory bout under the rules of a sanctioning organization.

"SEC. 11. SANCTIONING ORGANIZATIONS.

"(a) OBJECTIVE CRITERIA.—Within 2 years after the date of the enactment of the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act, the Association of Boxing Commissions shall develop and shall approve by a vote of no less than a majority of its member State boxing commissioners, guidelines for objective and consistent written criteria for the ratings of professional boxers. It is the sense of Congress that sanctioning bodies and State boxing commissions should follow these ABC guidelines.

"(b) APPEALS PROCESS.—A sanctioning organization shall not be entitled to receive any compensation, directly or indirectly, in connection with a boxing match, until it provides the boxers with notice that the sanctioning organization shall, within 7 days after receiving a request from a boxer questioning that organization's rating of the boxer—

"(1) provide to the boxer a written explanation of the organization's criteria, its rating of the boxer, and the rationale or basis for its rating (including a response to any

specific questions submitted by the boxer); and

"(2) submit a copy of its explanation to the Association of Boxing Commissions.

"(c) NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE IN RATING.—A sanctioning organization shall not be entitled to receive any compensation, directly or indirectly, in connection with a boxing match, until, with respect to a change in the rating of a boxer previously rated by such organization in the top 10 boxers, the organization—

"(1) posts a copy, within 7 days of such change, on its Internet website or home page, if any, including an explanation of such change, for a period of not less than 30 days; and

"(2) provides a copy of the rating change and explanation to an association to which at least a majority of the State boxing commissions belong.

"(d) PUBLIC DISCLOSURE.—

"(1) FTC FILING.—A sanctioning organization shall not be entitled to receive any compensation directly or indirectly in connection with a boxing match unless, not later than January 31 of each year, it submits to the Federal Trade Commission and to the ABC—

"(A) a complete description of the organization's ratings criteria, policies, and general sanctioning fee schedule;

"(B) the bylaws of the organization;

"(C) the appeals procedure of the organization for a boxer's rating; and

"(D) a list and business address of the organization's officials who vote on the ratings of boxers.

"(2) FORMAT; UPDATES.—A sanctioning organization shall—

"(A) provide the information required under paragraph (1) in writing, and, for any document greater than 2 pages in length, also in electronic form; and

"(B) promptly notify the Federal Trade Commission of any material change in the information submitted.

"(3) FTC TO MAKE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO PUBLIC.—The Federal Trade Commission shall make information received under this subsection available to the public. The Commission may assess sanctioning organizations a fee to offset the costs it incurs in processing the information and making it available to the public.

"(4) INTERNET ALTERNATIVE.—In lieu of submitting the information required by paragraph (1) to the Federal Trade Commission, a sanctioning organization may provide the information to the public by maintaining a website on the Internet that—

"(A) is readily accessible by the general public using generally available search engines and does not require a password or payment of a fee for full access to all the information;

"(B) contains all the information required to be submitted to the Federal Trade Commission by paragraph (1) in an easy to search and use format; and

"(C) is updated whenever there is a material change in the information.

"SEC. 12. REQUIRED DISCLOSURES TO STATE BOXING COMMISSIONS BY SANCTIONING ORGANIZATIONS.

"A sanctioning organization shall not be entitled to receive any compensation directly or indirectly in connection with a boxing match until it provides to the boxing commission responsible for regulating the match in a State a statement of—

"(1) all charges, fees, and costs the organization will assess any boxer participating in that match;

"(2) all payments, benefits, complimentary benefits, and fees the organization will receive for its affiliation with the event, from the promoter, host of the event, and all other sources; and

"(3) such additional information as the commission may require.

"SEC. 13. REQUIRED DISCLOSURES FOR PROMOTERS.

"(a) DISCLOSURES TO THE BOXING COMMISSIONS.—A promoter shall not be entitled to receive any compensation directly or indirectly in connection with a boxing match until it provides to the boxing commission responsible for regulating the match in a State a statement of—

"(1) a copy of any agreement in writing to which the promoter is a party with any boxer participating in the match;

"(2) a statement made under penalty of perjury that there are no other agreements, written or oral, between the promoter and the boxer with respect to that match; and

"(3)(A) all fees, charges, and expenses that will be assessed by or through the promoter on the boxer pertaining to the event, including any portion of the boxer's purse that the promoter will receive, and training expenses; (B) all payments, gifts, or benefits the promoter is providing to any sanctioning organization affiliated with the event; and

"(C) any reduction in a boxer's purse contrary to a previous agreement between the promoter and the boxer or a purse bid held for the event.

"(b) DISCLOSURES TO THE BOXER.—A promoter shall not be entitled to receive any compensation directly or indirectly in connection with a boxing match until it provides to the boxer it promotes—

"(1) the amounts of any compensation or consideration that a promoter has contracted to receive from such match;

"(2) all fees, charges, and expenses that will be assessed by or through the promoter on the boxer pertaining to the event, including any portion of the boxer's purse that the promoter will receive, and training expenses; and

"(3) any reduction in a boxer's purse contrary to a previous agreement between the promoter and the boxer or a purse bid held for the event.

"(c) INFORMATION TO BE AVAILABLE TO STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—A promoter shall make information required to be disclosed under this section available to the chief law enforcement officer of the State in which the match is to be held upon request of such officer.

"SEC. 14. REQUIRED DISCLOSURES FOR JUDGES AND REFEREES.

"A judge or referee shall not be entitled to receive any compensation, directly or indirectly, in connection with a boxing match until it provides to the boxing commission responsible for regulating the match in a State a statement of all consideration, including reimbursement for expenses, that will be received from any source for participation in the match.

"SEC. 15. CONFIDENTIALITY.

"(a) IN GENERAL.—Neither a boxing commission or an Attorney General may disclose to the public any matter furnished by a promoter under section 13 except to the extent required in a legal, administrative, or judicial proceeding.

"(b) EFFECT OF CONTRARY STATE LAW.—If a State law governing a boxing commission requires that information that would be furnished by a promoter under section 13 shall be made public, then a promoter is not required to file such information with such

State if the promoter files such information with the ABC.

"SEC. 16. JUDGES AND REFEREES.

"No person may arrange, promote, organize, produce, or fight in a professional boxing match unless all referees and judges participating in the match have been certified and approved by the boxing commission responsible for regulating the match in the State where the match is held."

SEC. 5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

Section 17 of the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6308) (as redesignated by section 4 of this Act) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence by striking "No member" and inserting "(a) REGULATORY PERSONNEL.—No member"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(b) FIREWALL BETWEEN PROMOTERS AND MANAGERS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—It is unlawful for—

"(A) a promoter to have a direct or indirect financial interest in the management of a boxer; or

"(B) a manager—

"(i) to have a direct or indirect financial interest in the promotion of a boxer; or

"(ii) to be employed by or receive compensation or other benefits from a promoter, except for amounts received as consideration under the manager's contract with the boxer.

"(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Paragraph (1)—

"(A) does not prohibit a boxer from acting as his own promoter or manager; and

"(B) only applies to boxers participating in a boxing match of 10 rounds or more.

"(c) SANCTIONING ORGANIZATIONS.—

"(1) PROHIBITION ON RECEIPTS.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), no officer or employee of a sanctioning organization may receive any compensation, gift, or benefit, directly or indirectly, from a promoter, boxer, or manager.

"(2) EXCEPTIONS.—Paragraph (1) does not apply to—

"(A) the receipt of payment by a promoter, boxer, or manager of a sanctioning organization's published fee for sanctioning a professional boxing match or reasonable expenses in connection therewith if the payment is reported to the responsible boxing commission; or

"(B) the receipt of a gift or benefit of de minimis value."

SEC. 6. ENFORCEMENT.

Subsection (b) of section 18 of the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6309) (as redesignated by section 4 of this Act) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1) by inserting a comma and "other than section 9(b), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, or 16," after "this Act";

(2) by redesignating paragraphs (2) and (3) as paragraphs (3) and (4), respectively;

(3) by inserting after paragraph (1) the following:

"(2) VIOLATION OF ANTIEXPLOITATION, SANCTIONING ORGANIZATION, OR DISCLOSURE PROVISIONS.—Any person who knowingly violates any provision of section 9(b), 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, or 16 of this Act shall, upon conviction, be imprisoned for not more than 1 year or fined not more than—

"(A) \$100,000; and

"(B) if a violation occurs in connection with a professional boxing match the gross revenues for which exceed \$2,000,000, an additional amount which bears the same ratio to \$100,000 as the amount of such revenues compared to \$2,000,000, or both.";

(4) in paragraph (3) (as redesignated by paragraph 2 of this subsection) by striking "section 9" and inserting "section 17(a)"; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:

"(c) ACTIONS BY STATES.—Whenever the chief law enforcement officer of any State has reason to believe that a person or organization is engaging in practices which violate any requirement of this Act, the State, as parens patriae, may bring a civil action on behalf of its residents in an appropriate district court of the United States—

"(1) to enjoin the holding of any professional boxing match which the practice involves;

"(2) to enforce compliance with this Act;

"(3) to obtain the fines provided under subsection (b) or appropriate restitution; or

"(4) to obtain such other relief as the court may deem appropriate.

"(d) PRIVATE RIGHT OF ACTION.—Any boxer who suffers economic injury as a result of a violation of any provision of this Act may bring an action in the appropriate Federal or State court and recover the damages suffered, court costs, and reasonable attorneys fees and expenses.

"(e) ENFORCEMENT AGAINST FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION, STATE ATTORNEYS GENERAL, ETC.—Nothing in this Act authorizes the enforcement of—

"(1) any provision of this Act against the Federal Trade Commission, the United States Attorney General, or the chief legal officer of any State for acting or failing to act in an official capacity;

"(2) subsection (d) of this section against a State or political subdivision of a State, or any agency or instrumentality thereof; or

"(3) section 10 against a boxer acting in his capacity as a boxer."

SEC. 7. ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—Section 2(a) of the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6301(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (10) by striking the period at the end and inserting "; including the Virgin Islands."; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

"(11) EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE CONTRACT.—The term 'effective date of the contract' means the day upon which a boxer becomes legally bound by the contract.

"(12) BOXING SERVICE PROVIDER.—The term 'boxing service provider' means a promoter, manager, sanctioning body, licensee, or matchmaker.

"(13) CONTRACT PROVISION.—The term 'contract provision' means any legal obligation between a boxer and a boxing service provider.

"(14) SANCTIONING ORGANIZATION.—The term 'sanctioning organization' means an organization that sanctions professional boxing matches in the United States—

"(A) between boxers who are residents of different States; or

"(B) that are advertised, otherwise promoted, or broadcast (including closed circuit television) in interstate commerce.

"(15) SUSPENSION.—The term 'suspension' includes within its meaning the revocation of a boxing license."

(b) STATE BOXING COMMISSION PROCEDURES.—Section 7(a)(2) of the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6306(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C) by striking "or";

(2) in subparagraph (D) by striking "documents." at the end and inserting "documents; or"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(E) unsportsmanlike conduct or other inappropriate behavior inconsistent with generally accepted methods of competition in a professional boxing match."

(c) RENEWAL PERIOD FOR IDENTIFICATION CARDS.—Section 6(b)(2) of the Professional

Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6305(b)(2)) is amended by striking "2 years." and inserting "4 years."

(d) REVIEW OF SUSPENSIONS.—Section 7(a)(3) of the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6306(a)(3)) is amended by striking "boxer" and inserting "boxer, licensee, manager, matchmaker, promoter, or other boxing service provider".

(e) ALTERNATIVE SUPERVISION.—Section 4 of the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6303) is amended—

(1) by striking "No person" and inserting "(a) No person"; and

(2) by inserting at the end thereof the following:

"(b) For the purpose of this Act, if no State commission is available to supervise a boxing match according to subsection (a), then—

"(1) the match may not be held unless it is supervised by an association of boxing commissions to which at least a majority of the States belong; and

"(2) any reporting or other requirement relating to a supervising commission allowed under this section shall be deemed to refer to the entity described in paragraph (1)."

(f) HEALTH AND SAFETY DISCLOSURES.—Section 6 of the Professional Boxing Safety Act of 1996 (15 U.S.C. 6305) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(c) HEALTH AND SAFETY DISCLOSURES.—It is the sense of Congress that a boxing commission should, upon issuing an identification card to a boxer under subsection (b)(1), make a health and safety disclosure to that boxer as that commission considers appropriate. The health and safety disclosure should include the health and safety risks associated with boxing, and, in particular, the risk and frequency of brain injury and the advisability that a boxer periodically undergo medical procedures designed to detect brain injury."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1832, and to insert extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Madam Speaker, earlier this year, 19 bipartisan State attorneys general and numerous State boxing commissioners from across the United States asked Congress for help in cleaning up the sport of boxing. These State agencies strongly endorsed the Muhammad Ali Act, saying it was necessary legislation to prevent exploitation of professional boxers and to curb the anticompetitive and fraudulent business practices in the sport. Congress is now giving the States and State boxing commissioners their requested assistance.

In 1996, the Committee on Commerce passed legislation establishing a uni-

form, nationwide system of licensing and minimum health and safety standards for boxers. This Act was a resounding success. Because of our bill, for the first time, States could keep track of and protect professional boxers with appropriate oversight and supervision. For example, when boxer Mike Tyson committed the barbaric act of biting off a portion of Evander Holyfield's ear 2 years ago, Tyson's suspension from boxing was swift and nationwide.

While the 1996 bill has been a resounding success, it was only an important first step of cleaning up the sport of boxing. Two weeks ago, the Miami Herald reported that over 30 prizefights have been fixed or tainted in the last 12 years.

Just last Thursday, a Federal grand jury issued a 32-count indictment against the president and three officials of the International Boxing Federation on charges of taking bribes from promoters and managers to manipulate rankings, as well as racketeering and money laundering. According to the Federal prosecutor, "In the IBF, rankings were bought, not earned, completely corrupting the ranking system."

The Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act would put an end to this corruption. It requires the establishment of objective and consistent criteria for the ratings of professional boxers. It requires disclosures of compensation received in connection with a boxing match by promoters, managers, sanctioning bodies, and judges and referees. It provides for tough new penalties for criminals who continue to try to manipulate and undermine the sport through coercion and bribes.

According to Boxing News, "The Ali Act, if enacted, would greatly clean up boxing in America." Ring Magazine calls this "well thought out" legislation that "will be a huge step toward getting rid of the bandits and parasites in the sport." ESPN says that "The Ali Act, modest in scope, can make a difference. It is a small, but significant step, and one that would cost nothing to taxpayers."

I congratulate the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Finance and Hazardous Materials, for his leadership in moving this bill forward, and I look forward to restoring honesty and integrity to this great sport.

Also, before closing, I want to acknowledge the support and assistance from the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING), the chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this important measure.

Madam Speaker, I include the following letters for the RECORD, as follows:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE,

Washington, DC, November 1, 1999.

Hon. TOM BLILEY,

Chairman, Committee on Commerce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN BLILEY: I am writing regarding H.R. 1832, the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act, which is within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Commerce and in addition the Committee on Education and the Workforce. The bill amends the Professional Boxing Safety Act. I have no objection to this bill being scheduled under suspension of the House Rules. The Committee on Commerce ordered the bill favorably reported on September 29, 1999.

Given the impending adjournment and since I support the reported bill, I do not intend to call a full Committee meeting to consider this bill; however, the Committee does hold an interest in preserving its jurisdiction with respect to issues raised in the bill and its jurisdictional prerogatives in future legislation. As such, Members of the Education and the Workforce would expect to be represented should the provisions of this bill be considered in a conference with the Senate.

I would appreciate the inclusion of this letter in the Report you file to accompany this bill. I thank you for your attention to this matter and look forward to swift passage of H.R. 1832.

Sincerely,

BILL GOODLING,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, November 2, 1999.

Hon. WILLIAM F. GOODLING,

Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR BILL: Thank you for your letter regarding your Committee's jurisdictional interest in H.R. 1832, the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act.

In the past, our committees have worked cooperatively in the enactment of the Professional Boxing Safety Act, and I acknowledge your role as an additional committee of jurisdiction. I appreciate your cooperation in moving the bill to the House floor expeditiously and agree that your decision to forgo further action on the bill will not prejudice the Committee on Education and the Workforce with respect to its jurisdictional prerogatives on this or similar legislation. Further, I will support your request for conferees should this bill be the subject of a House-Senate conference. I will also insert a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee's report on the bill and the Congressional Record when H.R. 1832 is considered by the House.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

TOM BLILEY,
Chairman.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1832, the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act.

For many years, there has been widespread concern, as the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman BLILEY) stated,

about the boxing industry in the United States. Not only have scandals plagued the industry as long as I can remember, but fighters have been taken advantage of financially, and opportunities to compete for a title have not always been awarded to legitimate contenders.

As my colleagues know, Madam Speaker, almost every other major sport in the United States operates with a central body to establish appropriate business standards and effective mechanisms of self-regulation. But not boxing. Boxing exists in a world of alphabet soup organizations whose rating methodologies are as visceral as the famous Ali mirage and promoters who are as untouchable as Ali was behind the "rope-a-dope."

The purpose of the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act is to increase disclosure and prevent abuses in professional boxing, specifically targeting conflicts of interest that arise for promoters.

H.R. 1832 limits contracts between boxers and promoters, ending the coercive practice of requiring long contracts for fighters to obtain particular bouts.

The bill also seeks to ensure that the manager is an independent applicant of the boxer, not an agent serving the financial interests of the promoter.

Furthermore, the sanctioning organizations would have to establish objective criteria for the rating of professional boxers and to fully disclose their bylaws, rating systems, and officials.

I firmly believe that, with these limitations, the boxing industry can take a giant step toward the 21st century and the ending of corruption.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman BLILEY) and especially the gentleman from Ohio (Chairman OXLEY) for his hard work on this legislation. Much credit is also due to Senator JOHN MCCAIN, who is the author of the Senate approved version of this bill.

In the end, the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act puts abuse in the boxing industry on the ropes. By passing this important legislation, I believe that Congress will deliver the final one-two punch to boxing corruption.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), the chairman of the subcommittee.

Mr. OXLEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

Last Thursday, the President and three other officials from the IBF, the International Boxing Federation, were indicted. They were brought under criminal charges for operating IBF's

sanctioning body as a racketeering enterprise in which fighters' rankings were routinely altered in exchange for hundreds of thousands of dollars in illicit bribes from promoters and managers. This scandal follows on the heels of an investigation by the Miami Herald revealing more than 30 fights in the past 12 years have been fixed or tainted, including at least one heavyweight championship match.

Madam Speaker, I have with me a copy of the Miami Herald, Sunday, October 31, which is titled "Fixed Fights, Down for the Count," in which the columnist, Ken Rodriguez of the Miami Herald, chronicles just how bad the situation is in boxing and how badly it needs cleaning up. And I want to cite that as an example of what we can do, working with the media, to uncover this kind of activity.

In 1996, I sponsored a bipartisan boxing reform bill which prohibited conflicts of interest for State boxing commission employees. It also established the first-ever uniformed licensing and health and safety system to protect professional boxers. This legislation was a great success and the State boxing commissions and attorneys general now have asked us to go one step further to clean up the corruption among boxing promoters, managers, and sanctioning bodies.

H.R. 1832, the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act, is based on the numerous bipartisan hearings this committee has held over the past 2 decades on the need to reform the boxing industry. On June 29, 1999, our committee held a hearing, just after the controversial decision in the Holyfield-Lewis heavyweight championship fight, in which an IBF judge awarded the title to Mr. Holyfield, the IBF champion, instead of to Mr. Lewis, the WBC champion and clear apparent winner, according to some boxing commentators. In the words of one hearing witness, the decision was "highly influenced." Another witness said bluntly, "Lewis was robbed."

H.R. 1832 expands on our initial success with boxing reform, extending the conflict-of-interest prohibitions in the 1996 act to apply to other boxing entities besides State commissions. Specifically, H.R. 1832 would enact seven critical reforms:

First, bribes are prohibited for sanctioning bodies. Two, conflicts of interest are prohibited for boxing managers and promoters. Three, boxers are protected from coercive contracts. Four, new strong disclosure requirements are created for promoters, sanctioning bodies, judges, and referees to reduce corruption. Fifth, boxing judges and referees are required to be approved by the State commissions. Sixth, unsportsmanlike conduct would be added as a new category of suspendable offenses. And, seven, the State boxing commissions are encouraged to adopt

uniform rules, regulations, rating criteria, and guidelines for contracts.

These are important reforms which, according to the Congressional Budget Office, would have no significant impact on the Federal budget and would not result in any significant cost to the States. This legislation passed the Senate earlier this year. It passed our committee by a bipartisan voice vote, and has received support from the president of the Association of Boxing Commissions, International Boxing Digest, Boxing News, the editor of Ring Magazine, the World Boxing Council, and numerous promoters, managers, and boxers.

In the words of one of boxing's greatest, Muhammad Ali, "The day this bill is signed into law cannot be soon enough. I pray justice will be done and somehow, along the way, honor can be restored to this sport."

Madam Speaker, I provide for inclusion in the RECORD two letters from Muhammad Ali in support of this legislation, the most recent dated November 8, today, as well as a letter from the National Association of Attorneys General in support of this legislation.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF ATTORNEYS GENERAL,
Washington, DC, April 28, 1999.

Hon. JOHN MCCAIN,
U.S. Senate, Chairman, Senate Commerce,
Science, and Transportation Committee,
Washington, DC.

Hon. THOMAS BLILEY,
House of Representatives, Chairman, Commerce
Committee, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN AND REPRESENTATIVE BLILEY: We, the leadership of the National Association of Attorneys General ("NAAG") Boxing Task Force, and Attorneys General interested in industry reform, strongly endorse the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act (S. 305) and fully support your efforts to improve the professional boxing industry. We believe this legislation will curb anti-competitive and fraudulent business practices and prevent blatant exploitation of professional boxers.

We are encouraged by the support S. 305 has received in the Senate, and we look forward to working with you to protect the health and safety of professional boxers and to prevent exploitation, fraud, and restraints of trade. The Muhammad Ali Act provides a practical approach to long-standing problems of fraud and restraints of trade in this industry.

The Boxing Task Force, currently comprised of 19 Attorneys General, was formally established in March 1998 after legislation was passed by both the House and Senate Commerce Committees and then subsequently by both the House and Senate. (The Professional Boxing Safety Act 15 U.S.C. §6301, et seq.). After Federal Trade Commission Chairman Robert Pitofsky's suggested that state Attorneys General review business practices in the professional boxing industry, the National Association of Attorneys General created the Boxing Task Force to examine interstate boxing practices in the United States, identify the problems therein, and recommend ways to improve the industry.

In furtherance of our common objectives, the Task Force conducted a public hearing on January 19-21, 1999, where testimony, including numerous recommendations, was received from individuals representing a cross-

section of the boxing industry. Testimony was elicited from boxing promoters on their role in the industry and on the issue of long term and exclusive contractual options. Sanctioning organizations testified about the methods utilized to rank fighters. Various experts on boxers' injuries discussed the necessity for medical clearance and the use of proper equipment and ringside safety precautions. Industry members and business leaders discussed a structured annuity and pension plan for professional boxers.

We are in the process of reviewing the testimony, and after further consultation with members of the industry, we will compile a report with our recommendations. We seek to reform certain practices within the industry, to return integrity to boxing on behalf of the athletes and the ticket-buying public, and to otherwise enhance the well-being of boxing and all associated with it.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the importance of the proposed enforcement guidelines of the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act, which would permit a State, as *parens patriae*, to bring a civil action on behalf of its residents in an appropriate district court of the United States for violations of the Boxing Reform Act. We believe that the authority to enjoin the holding of a professional boxing match, and to enforce compliance with the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act, is necessary to ensure lawful and responsible boxing industry compliance with national reforms.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. We hope you will favorably consider the Muhammad Ali Act. We stand ready to assist you as the bill advances, so please feel free to call on us.

Sincerely yours,

Eliot Spitzer, Attorney General of New York, Chair, NAAG Boxing Task Force; Jim Ryan, Attorney General of Illinois, Vice Chair, NAAG Boxing Task Force; Janet Napolitano, Attorney General of Arizona; Richard Blumenthal, Attorney General of Connecticut; Bill Lockyer, Attorney General of California; Robert A. Butterworth, Attorney General of Florida; Jeffrey A. Modisett, Attorney General of Indiana; Tom Miller, Attorney General of Iowa; Richard P. Ieyoub, Attorney General of Louisiana; J. Joseph Curran, Jr., Attorney General of Maryland; Mike Moore, Attorney General of Mississippi; Jeremiah W. "Jay" Nixon, Attorney General of Missouri; Frankie Sue Del Papa, Attorney General of Nevada; Peter Verniero, Attorney General of New Jersey; W.A. Drew Edmondson, Attorney General of Oklahoma; Hardy Myers, Attorney General of Oregon; Mike Fisher, Attorney General of Pennsylvania; José A. Fuentes-Agostini, Attorney General of Puerto Rico; Mark L. Earley, Attorney General of Virginia.

GREATEST OF ALL TIME, INC.,

Berrien Springs, MI, November 8, 1999.

Hon. MICHAEL OXLEY,
Hon. ELIOT ENGEL,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES OXLEY AND ENGEL: We are pleased that "The Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act" (H.R. 1832) is being brought up before the full House of Representatives. We strongly support this bill which will protect boxers from exploitations and unfair treatment by unscrupulous promoters and other business interests that

dominate this troubled industry. We urge all members of Congress to support this effort to make boxing a more honorable sport.

Most sincerely,

MUHAMMAD ALI.

LONNIE ALI.

MUHAMMAD ALI,

Berrien Springs, MI, June 30, 1998.

Senator JOHN MCCAIN,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR MCCAIN: Thank you for all of your effort in setting up guidelines for boxers in the ring today and for those in the future. I can't begin to express how honored I am that you would name the Boxing Reform Act after me.

After reading the summary you sent me, I can only tell you that these guidelines are long overdue. I only wish they would have been in effect when I was boxing.

Thank you for caring enough about the sport of boxing that you would help those in the ring today and in the future.

Sincerely,

MUHAMMAD ALI.

Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN).

Mr. TAUZIN. Madam Speaker, during our subcommittee markup on this bill earlier this year, we asked a panel of witnesses about the judging of the Holyfield-Lewis championship unification fight that had just occurred. Two said the scoring was incompetent, two indicated that it was dishonest, and the last said Lewis was robbed. Well, we all are robbed when one of our national sports becomes tainted in such a way.

I grew up watching boxing as a child with my grandfather and my dad in the little community of Chackbay, Louisiana. I have heard of too many young fighters who have put so much into training themselves for a big fight only to suffer from what Muhammad Ali has called the "dishonest ways" of promoters.

This bill protects boxers from dishonest promoters. It prohibits coercive contracts and empowers the States to develop uniform rules and regulations governing the sport. It requires the sanctioning bodies, the referees, judges, and promoters to disclose any conflicts of interest and sources of compensation to help the States enforce their laws and protect boxers from any taint of corruption.

I want to note, as my good friend, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), has done, that this legislation has the support of the president of the Association of Boxing Commissioners, Ring Magazine, International Boxing Digest, Boxing News, numerous promoters, managers, and boxers, all of who want to clean up this sport and indeed restore it to its former glory.

Last June, when we began our work in the subcommittee, we indeed promised that we would bring this reform bill to the floor of the House. I am very happy that the Committee on Commerce, with the help of the gentleman

from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), kept that promise and we have now delivered this bill to the floor of the House.

I also want to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for working so closely with the gentleman from Ohio on this legislation, and, of course, the chairman and ranking member of our full Committee on Commerce for moving this bill forward. This is long overdue, and those who love the sport of boxing, as I do, and so many do in my district and across America, will hail this day as a very important day in restoring the dignity and the glory of the sport of boxing in America.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume in closing to acknowledge that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle did note that I am not the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), who has worked very hard on this bill.

I too would like to commend him. He is sorry he could not be here to manage the time today, but he had a family emergency and I am filling in.

This is an excellent bill, and I commend particularly the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1832, the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act.

For years, there has been widespread concern about the boxing industry in the United States. Not only have scandals plagued the industry as long as I can remember, but fighters have been taken advantage of financially and opportunities to compete for a title have not always been awarded to legitimate contenders.

As you know, Madam Speaker, almost every other major sport in the United States operates with a central body to establish appropriate business standards and effective mechanisms of self-regulation. Not boxing. Boxing exists in a world of alphabet soup organizations whose rating methodologies are as ephemeral as the famous Ali "mirage" and promoters who are as untouchable as Ali was behind the "rope-a-dope."

The purpose of the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act is to increase disclosure and prevent abuses in professional boxing, specifically targeting conflicts of interest that arise for promoters.

H.R. 1832 limits contracts between boxers and promoters, ending the coercive practice of requiring long contracts for fighters to obtain particular bouts.

The bill also seeks to ensure that the manager is an independent advocate of the boxer, not an agent serving the financial interest of the promoter.

Furthermore, the sanctioning organizations would have to establish objective criteria for the rating of professional boxers and fully disclose their by-laws, rating systems, and officials.

I firmly believe that with these limitations, the boxing industry can take a giant step toward the 21st century and the ending of corruption.

I would like to thank my good friend, Chairman OXLEY, for his hard work on this legislation. It has been my pleasure to serve as the

lead Democratic cosponsor of his bill in the House and to cosign several dear colleagues with him.

Much credit is also due to Senator JOHN MCCAIN, author of the Senator-approved version of the bill. I would also like to call attention to Eliot Spitzer, the Attorney General of the State of New York, for his efforts to root out corruption in the boxing industry. As Chairman of the National Association of Attorneys General Boxing Task Force, Eliot Spitzer has helped guide Congress through the legal technicalities required for effective enforcement of new boxing regulations. His contribution and testimony before Congress will not be forgotten.

In the end, the Muhammad Ali Boxing Reform Act puts abuse in the boxing industry on the ropes. By passing this important legislation, I believe that Congress will deliver the final one, two punch to boxing corruption.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1832, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION BY LIVING PERSONS WHO HAVE DONATED A KIDNEY TO SAVE A LIFE

Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 94) recognizing the generous contribution made by each living person who has donated a kidney to save a life.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 94

Whereas kidneys are vital organs that clean the blood by removing wastes, and failed kidneys have lost the ability to remove these wastes;

Whereas in the United States more than 250,000 patients with kidney failure, also known as end stage renal disease (ESRD), have died since 1989;

Whereas during 1996, 283,932 patients were in treatment for ESRD, and an additional 73,091 patients began treatment for ESRD;

Whereas the most common cause of ESRD has consistently been diabetes, because the high levels of blood sugar in persons with diabetes cause the kidneys to filter too much blood and leave the kidneys, over time, unable to filter waste products;

Whereas of the patients who began treatment for ESRD in 1996, 43 percent were persons with diabetes;

Whereas ESRD can be treated with dialysis, which artificially cleans the blood but which imposes significant burdens on quality of life, or with a successful kidney trans-

plant operation, which frees the patient from dialysis and brings about a dramatic improvement in quality of life;

Whereas in 1996 the number of kidneys transplanted in the United States was 12,238, with 25 percent of the kidneys donated from biologically related living relatives, 5 percent from spousal or other biologically unrelated living persons, and the remainder from cadavers;

Whereas from 1988 to 1997, the number of patients on the waiting list for a cadaveric kidney transplant increased more than 150 percent, from 13,943 to more than 35,000;

Whereas the annual number of cadaveric kidneys available for transplant has increased only slightly, from 8,327 in 1994 to 8,526 in 1996, an increase of less than 100 such kidneys per year;

Whereas from 1988 to 1997, the annual number of kidneys donated by living persons rose 104 percent, from 1,812 to 3,705; and

Whereas in 1995, the 3-year survival rate for kidney recipients was 82 percent if the donor was a living parent, 85 percent if the donor was a living spouse, 81 percent if the donor was a biologically unrelated living person other than a spouse, and 70 percent if the kidney was cadaveric: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the generous contribution made by each living person who has donated a kidney to save a life; and

(2) acknowledges the advances in medical technology that have enabled living kidney transplantation to become a viable treatment option for an increasing number of patients with end stage renal disease.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BLILEY).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on House Resolution 94, and to insert extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. BLILEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of H. Res. 94, a resolution recognizing the generous contribution made by each living person who has donated a kidney to save the life of another person.

Americans who donate their organs to save another's life are heroes, and I am delighted that the House of Representatives has taken the time to recognize them as such. From 1998 to 1997, the annual number of kidneys donated by living persons rose 104 percent, from 1,812 to 3,705. Even so, the number of people on dialysis while they wait for a kidney transplant has grown to some 35,000. We have to do more.

The Committee on Commerce has spent a great deal of time and effort in the last year working to develop good

solutions to the difficult problem of increasing the supplies of donated organs while safeguarding the system from unintended bureaucratic interference that would dramatically harm efforts to increase donations. Many of those ideas are embodied in H.R. 2418, the Organ Procurement and Transplant Patient Network Amendments of 1999, which was reported out of my committee just 3 weeks ago.

Among the initiatives in H.R. 2418 is a program to provide living and travel expenses for those individuals who donate an organ to a person requiring a transplant in another State. The committee found that there may be many willing donors who would like to save the life of another American but find themselves in financial circumstances that would make it impossible for them to take a leave of absence from their job. H.R. 2418 would ease that burden.

I am also proud to say that due to the Committee on Commerce efforts, H.R. 3075, the Medicare, Medicaid and S-CHIP Balance Budget Refinement Act of 1999, added \$200 million to pay for additional immunosuppressive drug therapy. Medicare presently only covers these drugs for 36 months. This bill takes a first step at addressing that issue and allows us to provide more coverage for needy organ transplant patients. Access to these drugs can literally make the difference between life and death.

While we in Congress continue to do what we can to safeguard the organ allocation system from bureaucratic interference, and work to address financial problems donors face as well as those recipients who need affordable immunosuppressive drug therapy, let us remember the role that the thousands of ordinary Americans have played in the lives of their neighbors and families who have donated kidneys. We salute you for your sacrifice and your charity.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DEGETTE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I again want to thank my chairman, the esteemed gentleman from Virginia, for bringing this bill up, and I also want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. NETHERCUTT), for the opportunity to recognize those individuals who are willing to make a living donation of one of their kidneys. The gentleman from Washington and I are coauthors of the Congressional Diabetes Caucus, and both of us recognize that for those who care about that particular issue, kidney disease and kidney donation is a critical and important issue for us to be discussing today.

Those who donate kidneys are courageous individuals who give selflessly of themselves, literally, to save another